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February 8, 1978

IC 78-2304

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

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FROM:

Deputy to the DCI for
Resource Management

SUBJECT: Prospects for Intelligence Community Supply
of Russian Linguists 25X1

REFERENCE: DCI Memorandum dated 1 September 1977,
Subject: Russian Linguists (ER 77-8461)

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1. Action Requested: That you sign the attached memorandum, which tasks the NFIB Ad Hoc Task Force on the Linguistic Problem to develop a series of initiatives designed to improve the recruiting, retention and qualifications of linguists.

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2. Background:

a. In the referenced memorandum, you expressed concern about the prospects and possible shortfalls in the supply of Russian linguists. In order to assess this situation throughout the Community, the members of the NFIB Ad Hoc Task Force on the Linguistic Problem, which was established last year, were tasked to provide information from their organizations on the availability, training and use of Russian linguists. A report was prepared aggregating experiences throughout the Community.

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c. In an attempt to improve the supply and upgrade the skills of their linguists, most Community organizations have strengthened their recruiting efforts, some are intensifying their training programs, and others are attempting to improve their personnel management procedures and systems. While these measures will bring some relief, the report asserts that they must be augmented by other efforts, including national-level support, if shortfalls are to be averted.

d. The Task Force has found that linguist-associated problems generally impact all languages, not only Russian. Therefore, actions to address the Community's linguist problems should not focus only on problems associated with the supply and use of Russian linguists. The actions that can be undertaken right away are:

- (1) to establish an inventory of Community resources and develop improved estimates of current and future requirements;
- (2) to develop and adopt a collaborative Community linguist recruiting program among intelligence agencies; and
- (3) to develop and underwrite financial and psychic incentive programs to enhance the attractiveness and prestige of linguist positions.

Additional areas that should be addressed are:

- (1) the problem of attrition among SCA linguists;
- (2) certification and periodic retesting of linguistic proficiency; and
- (3) programs for language training and related skills development and maintenance.

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a. Although the Community agencies recognize the problem and are attempting to deal with it, greater emphasis is required.

b. You can generate this impetus by:

(1) giving the effort greater visibility as a DCI priority requirement;

(2) providing an administrative mechanism for focusing attention and resources on those particular language and skill requirements to which we must provide special incentives in order to attract and retain needed personnel.

c. In sponsoring the foregoing, we should avoid a program that would, in reality or in appearance, "nationalize" the management of linguist personnel with respect to placement and utilization.

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[Redacted]

Attachment

Proposed memo to NFIB from DCI,
subject: Intelligence Community
Linguist Resources, w/att: NFIB
Ad Hoc Task Force Report on
Prospects for IC Supply of Russian
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